

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 /080 W
-----281452Z 116160 /47

P R 281325Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2048
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 2937

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR FR MO
SUBJECT: EXPULSION FROM MOROCCO OF FRENCH COOPERANTS LINKED
WITH CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES

1. MOROCCAN MINISTRY OF INTERIOR ANNOUNCED MAY 27 THAT A NUMBER OF FRENCH COOPERANTS (OVERSEAS VOLUNTEERS) WERE BEING EXPELLED FROM MOROCCO ON CHARGES OF INVOLVEMENT WITH CLANDESTINE ELEMENTS WORKING AGAINST THE SECURITY OF THE STATE. INTERIOR MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT EXPLAINED THAT THE ARREST OF "FOREIGN ELEMENTS" IN LIAISON WITH THE EXTERIOR HAD LED TO THE DISCOVERY OF A SUPPORTING NETWORK CONSISTING OF SOME FRENCH TEACHERS AFFILIATED WITH THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT COOPERATION SERVICE. THE NETWORK WAS ACCUSED OF SHELTERING HOSTILE ELEMENTS, GIVING THEM FRENCH IDENTITY DOCUMENTS, HELPING WITH THEIR PROPAGANDA MATERIAL, AND PROVIDING LINKS WITH THE OUTSIDE. THREE OF SEVEN COOPERANTS APPREHENDED SAID TO HAVE ADMITTED GUILT TO FRENCH CONSULAR AUTHORITIES, BUT WITHOUT ILL INTENT, AND MOROCCAN AUTHORITIES HAD ACCEPTED THEIR EXPLANATION. MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT NOTED THAT MOROCCAN DESIRE TO AVOID ANY DETERIORATION OF MOROCCAN-
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FRENCH RELATIONS HAD LIMITED ACTION AGAINST THE COOPERANTS TO EXPULSION.

2. ACCORDING TO AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, ABOUT 30 MOROCCANS WERE ARRESTED AS PART OF A "MARXIST-LENINIST" NETWORK, INCLUDING SOME MEMBERS OF OUTLAWED ILA AL-AMAM ORGANIZATION. SWEEP BEGAN MAY 19, AND FRENCH SUSPECTS WERE ARRESTED IN RABAT, EL-JADIDA,

CASABLANCA, AND INEZGANE (AGADIR REGION). AFP RECALLED THAT DURING JANUARY-FEBRUARY TRIAL OF 176 MARXIST-LENINISTS IN CASABLANCA, ACCUSATIONS HAD BEEN MADE BY STATE PROSECUTOR THAT SOME COOPERANTS HAD ACTED AS INTERMEDIARIES AND FURNISHED MATERIAL ASSISTANCE FROM ABROAD TO CLANDESTINE MOROCCAN ORGANIZATIONS.

3. FRENCH AMBASSADOR RAIMOND, WHO SAW KING ON SUBJECT ON MAY 23, TOLD AMBASSADOR ON MAY 27 THAT SIX COOPERANTS WERE BEING HELD; TWO HAD DONE THINGS THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE, BUT OTHERS SEEMED SIMPLY IMMATURE. MOROCCAN AUTHORITIES HAD COOPERATED FULLY WITH FRENCH EMBASSY, AND HE EXPECTED MOROCCANS TO ACT IMMINENTLY ON FRENCH SUGGESTION THAT COOPERANTS AGAINST WHOM THERE WAS INCRIMINATING EVIDENCE BE EXPELLED. RAIMOND NOTED THAT MATTER HAD BEEN PUBLICIZED IN FRANCE AT INSTIGATION OF LEFTIST TRADE UNION (AGEN), FOLLOWING HIS CONFIDENTIAL BRIEFING OF UNION IN RABAT. RAIMOND DID NOT EXPECT THE AFFAIR TO AFFECT MOROCCAN-FRENCH RELATIONS.

4. FRENCH POL COUNSELOR MADE ADDITIONAL POINT MAY 27 THAT HIS EMBASSY THOUGHT POLICE SWEEP HAD BEEN DECIDED ON LOWER THAN MINISTERIAL LEVEL, WHICH WOULD ACCOUNT FOR ILL-CHOSEN TIMING JUST BEFORE JUNE 3 MOROCCAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. HE NOTED THAT MOROCCAN LEFTISTS RECENTLY ARRESTED HAD POINTED FINGER AT ABOUT 20 COOPERANTS, FOUR OR FIVE OF WHOM STILL BEING SOUGHT BY POLICE. MOROCCAN POLICE HAD REFERRED TO SUSPECTED LINK OF ARRESTED MOROCCANS WITH POLISARIO, WHICH SAID TO HAVE ESTABLISHED "CACHES" IN A NUMBER OF MOROCCAN CITIES. FRENCH COUNSELOR CONSIDERED THAT COOPERANTS' OFFENSES HAD BEEN MINOR, CONFIDENTIAL

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SUCH AS CONTACTS WITH MOROCCAN SUSPECTS AND RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS ON THEIR BEHALF. TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, NO WEAPONS FOUND IN THEIR POSSESSION. ACCORDING TO COUNSELOR, KING HAD TOLD FRENCH AMBASSADOR THAT AFTER EXPERIENCE OF CASABLANCA TRIALS, HE DID NOT WANT TO HAVE ANY FURTHER POLITICAL TRAILS AND THEREFORE FAVORED EXPLUSION. WHILE FRENCH EMBASSY DID NOT EXPECT GOF-GOM RELATIONS TO BE AFFECTED, CURRENT RECRUITMENT OF COOPERANTS IN FRANCE FOR 1977-78 ACADEMIC YEAR MIGHT WELL HAVE GREATER SHORTFALL THAN THE ONE ALREADY ANTICIPATED.

5. COMMENT: WITH 8000 COOPERANTS IN MOROCCO, SOME WITH DEFINITE LEFTIST TENDENCIES, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT SERIOUS PROBLEMS ARISE FROM TIME TO TIME. MOROCCANS, HIGHLY SENSITIVE OVER STATE SECURITY, UNDOUBTEDLY FELT COMPELLED TO ACT BUT CLEARLY WANT TO SEE THE AFFAIR OVER WITH AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, AND WITHOUT DAMAGE TO RELATIONS WITH FRANCE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EXPULSION, INTERVENTION, DISSIDENT FACTIONS
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977RABAT02937
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770191-1034
Format: TEL
From: RABAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977056/aaaaafbz.tel
Line Count: 114
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2529481
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EXPULSION FROM MOROCCO OF FRENCH COOPERANTS LINKED WITH CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES
TAGS: PFOR, FR, MO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/68a6a494-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009